

## Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

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EUR-25 PC-04 SAL-01 /184 W  
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R 101305Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8758

INFO GOV PANCANAL

USCINCSO

USUN NEW YORK 392

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 5468

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PN

SUBJ: FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF PANAMANIAN REVOLUTION

REF: PANAMA 5456

SUMMARY. EMBASSY EXPECTS OCTOBER 11 CELEBRATION TO BE PEACEFUL. HIGH GOP OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF OCTOBER 9 THAT NO DECISION HAD BEEN MADE WHETHER TORRIJOS WOULD MAKE SPEECH. HE ALSO SAID SECRETARY KISSINGER'S MEETING WITH FONMIN TACK IN NEW YORK MADE FURTHER CONTRIBUTION TO MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING CALM ATMOSPHERE. POSSIBLY OUTGOING ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT ELIAS CASTILLO COULD STRIKE DISCORDANT NOTE WITH WILD CRITICISM OF U.S., BUT WE EXPECT SPEECHES BY EXECUTIVE BRANCH OFFICIALS TO PRIMARILY FOCUS ON POSITIVE INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF "REVOLUTIONARY" GOVERNMENT, WITH ONLY LIMITED AND STANDARD CRITICISM OF U.S.

1. EMBASSY SOURCES AND INTELLIGENCE REPORTING INDICATE THERE WILL BE A PARADE OCTOBER 11 BY 3,000 NATIONAL GUARDSMEN PLUS SOME UNITS OF FIREMEN, AND A FLY-OVER BY THE PANAMANIAN AIR  
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FORCE. STUDENTS WILL NOT BE PARTICIPATING AND WILL BE TIGHTLY CONTROLLED. THE ASSEMBLY OF CORREGIMIENTO REPRESENTATIVES WILL BEGIN ITS ANNUAL ONE-MONTH SESSION ON OCTOBER 11.

PRESIDENT LAKAS AND POSSIBLY TORRIJOS ARE EXPECTED TO ADDRESS OPENING SESSION OF ASSEMBLY.

2. LUIS CARLOS NORIEGA, PRESIDENT OF ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL, TOLD EMBOFF OCTOBER 9 THAT HE AND OTHER TOP GOP OFFICIALS DID NOT YET KNOW WHETHER TORRIJOS WOULD SPEAK ON OCTOBER 11. HE SAID PRESIDENT LAKAS WAS SCHEDULED TO GIVE SHORT SPEECH BEFORE ASSEMBLY OF CORREGIMIENTO REPRESENTATIVES AND HE EXPECTED OUTGOING AND NEW PRESIDENTS OF ASSEMBLY OF CORREGIMIENTO REPRESENTATIVES TO SPEAK. NORIEGA EMPHASIZED SPEECHES AND CELEBRATION THIS YEAR SHOULD BE SOLEMN, RESTRAINED AND DIGNIFIED. NORIEGA SAID FOREIGN MINISTER TACK WAS VERY PLEASED WITH HIS TALK IN NEW YORK WITH SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER. THEIR MEETING WAS POSITIVE ELEMENT IN CREATING FAVORABLE ATMOSPHERE FOR TREATY NEGOTIATIONS AND PANAMA WOULD DO NOTHING OCTOBER 11 TO DISTURB SITUATION.

3. WE BELIEVE OCTOBER 11 SPEECH BY EITHER LAKAS OR TORRIJOS WOULD DEAL WITH INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF GOP DURING PAST YEAR, PLACING EMPHASIS ON "NATIONAL DIGNITY" THEME. TWO PRINCIPAL EVENTS WOULD BE UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING IN PANAMA AND TORRIJOS' TRIP TO EUROPE. THE FORMER WOULD BE DESCRIBED AS MAJOR SUCCESS IN ATTRACTING INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION TO EXISTENCE U.S. "COLONIAL ENCLAVE" IN CANAL ZONE AND SUPPORT FOR PANAMA'S DEMAND FOR REGAINING CONTROL OVER "ALL OF ITS NATIONAL TERRITORY." WE WOULD EXPECT TORRIJOS TO CITE AS EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS OF UNSC MEETING THE "FACT" THAT U.S. IS NOW GIVING PANAMA ISSUE MUCH HIGHER PRIORITY AND HAS AGREED ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS. AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S APPOINTMENT AS TREATY NEGOTIATOR WOULD BE DESCRIBED AS FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT TORRIJOS' POLICY IS BEARING FRUIT. WE EXPECT TORRIJOS' RECENT VISITS WITH GENERALISIMO FRANCO, MARSHAL TITO AND POPE PAUL VI TO BE PORTRAYED AS EVIDENCE OF HIGH STATUS TORRIJOS AND PANAMA HAVE ACHIEVED INTERNATIONALLY. PERSONAL INVITATION FROM PERON FOR TORRIJOS TO VISIT ARGENTINA MAY ALSO BE ANNOUNCED.

4. ON DOMESTIC FRONT DESPITE ACKNOWLEDGED INFLATION AND  
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OCCASIONAL SUPPLY SHORTAGES - FOR WHICH RESPONSIBILITY FOR EXPLAINING AND SOLVING HAS BEEN SHIFTED TO CABINET MINISTERS - THE "REVOLUTION" WILL ALSO CLAIM ACHIEVEMENTS. PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING CONSTITUTION OF 1972 WILL BE CITED, EMPHASIZING PARTICIPATION BY "POPULAR" SECTORS IN PASSAGE AND APPLICATION OF NEW LAWS. SERIES OF LAWS GIVING NEW BASIS FOR PANAMANIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT NOW IN CONSULTATION AND IMPLEMENTATION STAGES WILL BE HELD UP AS REVOLUTIONARY PROGRESS.

5. "DEMOCRATIC" NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATIONAL, PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS WILL BE HIGHLIGHTED BY

EMPHASIZING THAT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION HAS CONSULTED WITH PROVINCIAL COUNCILS (COMPOSED OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FROM THE PROVINCE) CONCERNING PROPOSED LEGISLATION. FINALLY, THE PASSAGE OF LAW OF OCTOBER 8 ESTABLISHING RENT CONTROL (SEE PANAMA 5456) WAS UNDOUBTEDLY TIMED FOR GOP TO CLAIM IT AS ACHIEVEMENT ON OCTOBER 11.

6. IN THE PAST, OCTOBER 11 HAS BEEN USED TO ANNOUNCE CHANGES IN GOP CABINET. RUMORS OF SUCH CHANGES WERE CIRCULATING FREELY IN AUGUST AND EARLY SEPTEMBER BUT HAVE RECEDED SOMEWHAT RECENTLY. ONE PERSISTENT RUMOR HAS BEEN THAT UNIVERSITY RECTOR ROMULO ESCOBAR BETHANCOURT WOULD BE REMOVED, BUT THIS MAY ONLY REFLECT WISHFUL THINKING ON THE PART OF PANAMANIAN CONSERVATIVES.

7. COMMENT. LACK OF CONFIRMATION WHETHER TORRIJOS WILL SPEAK ON OCTOBER 11 COULD BE ATTRIBUTABLE TO SECURITY MEASURES OR COULD BE THAT HE SIMPLY HAS NOT YET MADE UP HIS MIND. WE DOUBT THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO RESIST PRESSURES FOR HIM TO APPEAR AND SPEAK. IF HE SPEAKS U.S. COULD EXPECT RESTATEMENT OF PANAMA'S DEMAND FOR SOVEREIGNTY (READ JURISDICTION) OVER ALL OF ITS TERRITORY AND OTHER KEY POINTS CONTAINED IN GENERAL PRINCIPLES PANAMA HAS OUTLINED AS BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS, PLUS SOME STANDARD CRITICISM OF NATURE OF U.S. PRESENCE IN CANAL ZONE, BUT EMBASSY DOES NOT EXPECT HE WOULD BREAK NEW GROUND WITH HARD-HITTING ATTACK ON U.S. GENTLE OVERALL TREATMENT OF U.S. IN GOP-CONTROLLED MEDIA DURING RECENT MONTHS HAS INDICATED MAIN THRUST OF TORRIJOS' CURRENT TACTICS TOWARD U.S. IS TO PREPARE CONSTRUCTIVE, PEACEFUL ATMOSPHERE FOR RESUMPTION OF CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, WITHOUT REDUCING PRESSURES ON U.S. FOR SOLUTION  
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OF PROBLEM. SUCH CRITICISM OF U.S. THAT HAS OCCURRED HAS BEEN LIMITED AND HAS BEEN IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC SITUATIONS, I.E. ALLEGATIONS RE ASSASSINATION PLANS, TORRIJOS' STATEMENT IN CONNECTION WITH PAN CANAL PILOTS' STRIKE, AND CRITICISM ON U.S. SEIZURE OF CUBAN SHIP -- AND HAVE NOT BEEN FOLLOWED UP BY SUSTAINED ATTACKS. WE SEE NO INDICATION THAT THIS POLICY HAS CHANGED; MOREOVER, FONMIN TACK'S FAVORABLE IMPRESSION FROM HIS MEETING WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER IN NEW YORK IS AN ADDITIONAL FACTOR IN ENSURING THAT GOP WILL SEEK TO AVOID ACTIONS OCTOBER 11 TO DISRUPT CORDIAL RELATIONS WITH U.S. POSSIBLY, STRONG ANTI-AMERICAN STATEMENTS COULD APPEAR IN SPEECH OF OUTGOING PRESIDENT OF ASSEMBLY OF CORREGIMIENTO REPRESENTATIVES, ELIAS CASTILLO. LATTER IS WELL KNOWN FOR HIS IRRESPONSIBLE RHETORIC, AND IS REPORTEDLY BEING REPLACED BECAUSE TORRIJOS IS DISPLEASED WITH HIS PERFORMANCE. HENCE, CASTILLO HAS NOTHING TO LOSE BY MAKING A TYPICAL NATIONALISTIC, ANTI-U.S. SPEECH.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
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**Draft Date:** 10 OCT 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** garlanwa  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
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**Executive Order:** N/A  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** PANAMA 5456  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** garlanwa  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 09 OCT 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <09-Oct-2001 by smithjr>; APPROVED <10-Dec-2001 by garlanwa>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF PANAMANIAN REVOLUTION  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PN  
**To:** STATE INFO GOV PANCANAL  
USCINCSO  
USUN N Y  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005